

## 2015/2016 EPA Urban Waters Small Grants Request for Proposals Questions and Answers

The following questions and answers are in response to the 2015/2016 EPA Urban Waters Small Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) EPA-OW-IO-15-01. As stated in the RFP: **Note to Applicants:** In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

Please understand that this is our initial feedback based on the information you've provided, and we cannot make a final decision on the proposed activities until we have reviewed a complete proposal. Our response relates solely to eligibility rather than the merits of the proposal from a ranking standpoint.

### Notes

- If you're using a PC, you can search for your question using the Control + F function to do a word search. Mac users, you can search for your question using the Command + F function to do a word search.

### Question Categories

- A. Threshold Issues – Applicant Eligibility, Project Eligibility (Pp. 2-13 of this document)
- B. Budget/Funding Issues (Pp. 13-18 of this document)
- C. Evaluation Issues (Pp. 19 of this document)
- D. Grants.gov Questions (Pp. 20 of this document)
- E. Miscellaneous (Pp. 21-24 of this document)

<b>A. Threshold Issues – Applicant Eligibility and Project Eligibility</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. Am I eligible to apply to the Urban Waters Small Grants RFP?	Eligible applicants are described in Section III.A of the RFP. Section III.A states that States, local governments, Indian Tribes, public and private universities and colleges, public or private nonprofit institutions/organizations, intertribal consortia, and interstate agencies. Individuals, for-profit commercial entities and all federal agencies are not eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act 1995 are not eligible to apply.
2. Is there a population requirement a city needs to meet in order to be eligible for an Urban Waters Small Grant?	No, the population of a city is not a threshold criterion for eligibility purposes.
3. Are projects/applicants in Puerto Rico eligible to apply?	Yes, applicants and projects located in Puerto Rico are eligible to apply. Please refer to Section III of the RFP for eligibility requirements.
4. Are for-profit entities eligible to apply for an Urban Waters Small Grant?	No, for-profit entities are not eligible applicants.
5. Are international applicants and/or projects eligible for funding?	<p>Projects that are not located within the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or territories and possessions of the United States (“the U.S.”) are not eligible for Urban Waters grants. However, international organizations who are otherwise eligible to receive a grant under the Urban Waters Small Grants solicitation may apply to carry out projects in the U.S. provided the projects are located in a U.S. Census-defined Urbanized Area as described in Section III.C of the RFP. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 102(2)(F) enables us to apply our domestic statutes, such as the Clean Water Act 104(b)(3), internationally. Without NEPA 102(2)(F), we do not have authority to award grants for international work. By not including NEPA 102(2)(F) in the RFP, we are indicating that these grants are only available for work within the U.S.</p> <p>Eligible entities are described in Section III.A of the RFP.</p>

6. Are the Freely Associated States (FAS) of Palau, Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia eligible?	<p>No. Palau, the Marshall Islands, and Micronesia are all sovereign nations independent from the United States. These countries are neither territories nor possessions of the United States; therefore, they are not eligible for the Urban Waters Small Grants, unless the proposed work occurs within the United States. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 102(2)(F) enables us to apply our domestic statutes, such as the Clean Water Act 104(b)(3), internationally. Without NEPA 102(2)(F) we do not have authority to award grants internationally. By not including NEPA 102(2)(F) in the RFP, we are indicating that these grants are only available for work located within the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or territories and possessions of the United States.</p> <p>Eligible entities are described in Section III.A of the RFP.</p>
7. My organization currently has non-profit status with the state and is in the process of applying for federal non-profit status. Are we eligible to apply?	Yes, your organization is an eligible applicant since it is a recognized non-profit with your state. Additional information regarding eligible applicants is provided in Section III.A of the RFP.
8. Can my organization apply for this grant through a fiscal sponsor if we are not a 501(c)(3) but do urban river work?	No, your organization may not apply for an EPA grant through a "fiscal sponsor." Your organization must apply for a grant in its own name and be eligible for funding under the terms of the Urban Waters RFP. EPA does not recognize the "fiscal sponsor" concept as a means of allowing ineligible organizations and individuals to apply for EPA funding. Please note, however, that your organization does not have to have 501(c)(3) status to be eligible for funding if it is incorporated under state law as a non-profit or not-for-profit organization. Individuals and for profit firms are not eligible to apply for Urban Waters funding under any circumstances.
9. Can individuals apply for the grant?	No, individuals are not eligible to apply for Urban Waters Small Grants.
10. Can for-profit businesses apply for the grant?	No, for-profit businesses are not eligible to apply for Urban Waters Small Grants.

11. My 501(c)(3) organization has a federal affairs office that lobbies at the federal level. Are we an eligible applicant for the Urban Waters Small Grant?	If an organization is exempt from taxation under 501(c)(3), the fact that it uses some of its own funds for lobbying does not render the applicant ineligible. Please note that EPA funds may not be used for lobbying. Organizations exempt from taxation under 501(c)(4) that lobby are not eligible for grants by statute (The Lobbying Disclosure Act).
12. Can public schools apply?	Yes, public schools are eligible entities that may apply.
13. Can my project include design and/or construction projects?	A design project would generally be an eligible activity for funding. However, construction projects generally would not be an eligible activity under our funding authorities (with the exception of demonstration projects).
14. Are educational programs eligible for funding under this grant program?	Yes, education-related activities are generally eligible under CWA 104(b)(3), the funding authority for these grants. Please review Section I.D for a detailed description of this statutory authority and Section I.A and Appendix A for some information on and examples of eligible projects.
15. What age or stakeholder group is targeted?	We are not targeting any specific groups under this announcement. Please see the eligible applicants' information in Section III.A of the RFP.
16. Can funds be used on federal land?	<p>Urban Waters Small Grants may not be used for projects that improve federal lands or otherwise directly benefit the federal government. To do so would violate the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act by providing a service for the direct use or benefit of the federal government.</p> <p>However, some project activities (such as community meetings or workshops, etc.) may be held on federal lands or in federal facilities.</p>

<p>17. What is considered a demonstration project?</p>	<p>Demonstrations are projects that involve <b>new or experimental</b> technologies, methods, or approaches.</p> <p>If an applicant requests funding under the demonstration project category, then the applicant must describe how it meets this requirement.</p> <p>A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project.</p>
<p>18. Does all the proposed work have to take place on public property?</p>	<p>No, proposed activities do not have to take place on public property. There are no restrictions to specific land jurisdictions under this announcement, except that Urban Waters Small Grants cannot be used for projects that improve federal lands or otherwise directly benefit the federal government.</p>
<p>19. Is this grant opportunity open for land acquisition projects for watershed areas?</p>	<p>No, funds may not be used towards land acquisitions under this announcement.</p>
<p>20. Would multiple applicants from the same institution (a university, for example) be eligible to submit separate, unique applications?</p>	<p>Under this competition, only one proposal can be submitted per applicant. If an applicant submits more than one proposal, EPA will contact them before the review process begins to determine which one will be withdrawn. In the example you provided, that eligible entity would be the university. Please note that Principal Investigators are ineligible applicants; individuals are not eligible to apply under this announcement. However, applicants may list other eligible applicants as partners on proposals even if the partner also submits a proposal to EPA.</p> <p>For the purposes of this RFP, EPA considers governmental units to be a single applicant per the definition of <i>Grantee</i> in 2 CFR 1500 and they may submit <u>only one</u> proposal to EPA. The Agency will not accept proposals from more than one agency of the same governmental unit. EPA recognizes, however, that in</p>

	<p>some states the educational institutions comprising the state university system are separate legal entities under state law. The Agency will consider separate proposals from different components of the same state university system on a case by case basis (i.e., when state law authorizes each institution in a state university system to contract in its own name).</p>
21. Can an entity serve as a partner on multiple grant applications? Would this rule both applications out?	<p>Yes, an entity may serve as a partner on multiple grant applications. To do so would not render either application ineligible. In addition, an organization can submit a proposal as the primary applicant and also support the work of other organizations by being a partner.</p>
22. Please explain what EPA's process will be if it's determined that more than one proposal has been submitted by an applicant.	<p>Under this competition, only one proposal can be submitted per applicant. If an applicant submits more than one proposal, EPA will contact the applicant before the review process begins to determine which proposal will be withdrawn. All applicants from the same legal entity will be contacted on the same day and notified that EPA has received more than one proposal from their organization. Applicants will then be given an opportunity to work internally to determine which proposal will move forward in the review process for that organization. The organization must use its discretion in establishing the selection process to determine which proposal will be submitted on its behalf for the Urban Waters Small Grants. If the organization is not able to communicate a decision within 48 hours of being contacted by EPA, EPA will accept the proposal that was submitted first.</p> <p>For the purposes of this RFP, EPA considers governmental units to be a single applicant per the definition of <i>Grantee</i> in 2 CFR 1500 and they may submit <u>only one</u> proposal to EPA. The Agency will not accept proposals from more than one agency of the same governmental unit. However, EPA recognizes that in some states components of the state university system are separate governmental units under state law and the Agency will consider proposals from different components of a state university system on a case by case basis.</p>

	<p>Please note that applicants may list other eligible applicants as partners on proposals even if the partner also submits a proposal to EPA.</p>
<p>23. Can a federal agency be a sub-grantee (i.e., subawardee) on the grant?</p>	<p>The answer to whether a Federal agency can be a sub-grantee (i.e., whether EPA grant funds may be used to reimburse another federal agency), depends on whether that agency has statutory authority to receive and retain reimbursement for providing services to nonfederal organizations. For example, our understanding is that the U.S. Geological Survey has the requisite authority and all federal agencies may perform specialized scientific research for state and local governments under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act. We take the position that the transaction is neither a sub-grant (i.e., subaward) nor a procurement contract but is governed by the terms of the federal statute which authorizes reimbursement. In such a case, there would be no need for competition under the procurement rules or compliance with the OMB Circulars.</p> <p>Please note, that in such a scenario, the other federal agency would not be able to enter into an interagency agreement (IA) with EPA to be reimbursed. IAs are not permissible under this announcement.</p>
<p>24. Will you please send me detailed information on what the eligibility requirements are to receive an Urban Waters Small Grants program? Thank you.</p>	<p>See Section III.A in the RFP for detailed information on applicant eligibility. See Section III.C in the RFP for detailed information on project eligibility.</p>
<p>25. I'm hoping you can tell me if being a past Urban Waters Small Grants recipient would affect our competitiveness for a grant in this new round. May we apply for a second one a) as a primary applicant, or b) as a partner organization? If so, can we solicit funds for the same ongoing project, or can we only apply for funds for a different project and location?</p>	<p>Organizations who have received a previous Urban Waters Small Grant are eligible for funding. Note that one evaluation criterion for proposals is Past Performance, as discussed in Section V.B of the RFP.</p> <p>Past recipients may apply as a primary applicant and/or may participate as a partner organization. However, only one proposal may be submitted per primary applicant. Please see Section III.A of the RFP, and refer to the response to Question A.22.</p>

	<p>Past recipients may apply for funding for the same ongoing project that was previously funded if the project meets the threshold criteria in Section III.C in the RFP. Please also review the evaluation criteria in the RFP under Section V.A and the Urban Waters Small Grants Program Objectives under Section I.A to ensure that the project is appropriate for this competition.</p> <p>Past recipients may also apply for funding of a different project and location than was previously funded, as long as the newly proposed project meets the threshold criteria (see Section III.C of the RFP).</p>
26. My project area is adjacent and influences an area downstream and within an eligible geographic area but is outside of the defined boundary line of an eligible geographic area.	If a project is located outside the defined boundary line of an eligible geographic area, it is not eligible.
27. Does my office have to be located within the Eligible Geographic Area we're working in? Would my project be eligible if it takes place within the Eligible Geographic Area, but the support work happens in my office that is not within the Eligible Geographic Area?	<p>An eligible applicant's office or mailing address does not need to be located within an Eligible Geographic Area. As discussed in Section III.C of the RFP, proposed project activities must take place entirely within one of the Eligible Geographic Areas, as illustrated on the interactive map provided on the Urban Waters Small Grants mapping website at <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-mapping">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-mapping</a></p> <p>Project activities that take place entirely within one of the Eligible Geographic Areas, but that are supported by an office located outside of the Eligible Geographic Area, could be eligible for funding through this grant.</p>
28. Is there a limit to how many applications EPA is reviewing per Eligible Geographic Area?	No, there is no limit to the number of proposals that may be submitted per Eligible Geographic Area. EPA encourages all eligible applicants to apply.
29. Can the active engagement of underserved communities be at both the site of the work and in the community where the lead institution resides? For example, our proposed lead institution is one hour away from one of our community sites of interest.	Project activities must take place entirely within one of the Eligible Geographic Areas, as illustrated on the interactive map provided on the Urban Waters Small Grants mapping website at



	<p><a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-mapping">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-mapping</a></p> <p>If project activities propose the implementation of the project at two sites, one within the Eligible Geographic Area and one outside of it, the entire proposal may be deemed ineligible. However, if project activities within an Eligible Geographic Area result in participation from and/or provide benefits to communities located outside the Eligible Geographic Area, it would not deem the project ineligible.</p> <p>For example, if the project consists of holding a community planning meeting for a specific neighborhood (Neighborhood A) within an Eligible Geographic Area, and an adjacent neighborhood (Neighborhood B) that is outside of the Eligible Geographic Area wants to participate, this project activity is eligible for funding. However, if the project consists of holding community planning meetings for Neighborhoods A <b>and</b> B, grants funds may <u>not</u> be used towards the Neighborhood B community planning meeting.</p> <p>Note that grant funds may be used for project support work (eg, grant management activities/paperwork, indirect costs, etc) that takes place at an office located outside of an Eligible Geographic Area. (Please also see Question A.27).</p>
30. May I view a listing of past awards made by this program?	<p>Information on past recipients may be found at the following links: <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients</a> and <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients</a></p>

<p>31. Would the funding of dissertation research experiments, which would train a PhD student, be eligible for funding under this opportunity?</p>	<p>Yes, in general, dissertation research is eligible for funding. However, individuals are not eligible to apply for Urban Waters Small Grants. Please closely review all eligibility requirements in Section III.C.</p>
<p>32. I would like to know if projects that collect data about sediment quality, including taking and analyzing samples, compiling existing data, assessment, etc. would be eligible under this grant.</p>	<p>Based on the information you've provided, it appears the proposed project is eligible under our statutory funding authority, Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act. Please carefully read the threshold eligibility requirements described in the Section III of the RFP. We also encourage you to review Appendix A for a non-exhaustive list of project examples.</p> <p>Please note that this is our initial feedback based on the information you've provided, and we cannot make a final decision on the proposed activities until we have reviewed a complete proposal. Our response relates solely to eligibility rather than the merits of the proposal from a ranking standpoint. In fairness to all applicants, we cannot screen potential projects or applications prior to their submission through the established process. To do so would compromise an open and fair competition for the best project ideas to advance the restoration of urban waters.</p>
<p>33. I'd like to have a contact person whom I may speak with regarding the Urban Waters Small Grants program.</p>	<p>All questions should be submitted in writing to <a href="mailto:urbanwaters@epa.gov">urbanwaters@epa.gov</a>. In supporting an open and fair competition, we are posting all submitted questions and the responses on this Q&amp;A document. The Q&amp;A document is updated every other week with new questions and answers during the open period through Nov 6 (see posting schedule at <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-questions">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants-questions</a>).</p> <p>Please refer to Sections I and III of the RFP to understand the eligibility requirements proposals must meet in order to be</p>

	<p>considered for funding. In addition, Appendix A of the RFP provides project examples.</p> <p>You may also want to see the list of past recipients and their projects, available at <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients</a> and <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients</a>.</p>
34. How were the Eligible Geographic Areas chosen?	<p>The Eligible Geographic Areas are based on the U.S. Census-defined Urbanized Areas and the 12-digit hydrologic unit code system (HUC-12) that defines the watershed. The HUC system is a national standard watershed system based on surface hydrologic features and delineated by the U.S. Geological Survey.</p>
35. Can the project period be shorter than one year?	<p>Yes, a project period of less than one year is eligible for funding.</p> <p>We encourage you to review Section I of the RFP to understand the goals and objectives of the Small Grants program.</p>
36. Can partnering organizations request funding for the same project?	<p>Yes, there is no limit on the number of organizations that can submit proposals for the same project idea.</p>
37. Is the \$60,000 federal limit for this request only or for the entire project (i.e., can another federal grant be used with this grant for the project as long as there is enough non-federal match for both)?	<p>You may receive support for an entire project with \$60,000 in funds from the Urban Waters Small Grant and support from another federal grant(s) as long as you properly account for costs charged to each federal grant and separately meet the match requirements for both grants. You may not charge different federal grants for the same costs. Please note the proposal being submitted in response to the Urban Waters Small Grants RFP should focus on what is being requested in the announcement. The proposal will be evaluated on what potential Urban Waters funds will be used to do, as described in Sections IV and V of the RFP.</p>

38. If funding were requested to educate community members about green infrastructure/LID, could installation of such practices by volunteers be considered match (even though LID implementation is not an eligible activity for funding)?	No, that would not be eligible. Cost share/match funds must be used for eligible costs under CWA 104(3)(b).
39. Can the project be an improvement, or refinement, on practices already being employed? Or must it be a brand new concept?	Yes, eligible projects may be an improvement or refinement of an ongoing project provided the activities are eligible for funding under CWA 104(b)(3).
40. Could a rain garden, when used as part of training and teaching, be considered a demonstration project, and so be eligible for use of grant funds?	No. A rain garden is a well-known green infrastructure practice, and is not considered a demonstration project under our statutory funding authority. Please review the response to Question A.17 and Section I.C of the RFP to see the requirements of what may be considered a demonstration project.
41. If the subawardee is a non-profit or educational organization and helped to develop the proposal, is there a chance that they would not be eligible?	If the subaward is a proper one, the fact that a subawardee helped develop the proposal would not make the subawardee ineligible. Please see the response to Question B.18 on the definition of a proper sub-award. Please also carefully review the information in the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at <a href="http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm">http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm</a> .
42. Is stormdrain stenciling an appropriate component for this grant? What about the installation of signage?	The project activities you describe appear to be eligible for funding under our statutory funding authority, Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Waters Act. This is based on the assumption that stenciling and the signage is to convey information or increase knowledge. Please note that this is our initial feedback based on the information you've provided, and we cannot make a final decision on the proposed activities until we have reviewed a complete proposal. Our response relates solely to eligibility rather than the merits of the proposal from a ranking standpoint.

43. Are Brownfield project areas eligible? On sites that have Brownfield Area Planning grant funding already?	The geographic requirement, per the threshold eligibility criteria as discussed in Section III of the RFP, is that projects take place entirely within one of the Eligible Geographic Areas, as illustrated on the interactive map provided on the Urban Waters Small Grants mapping website at <i>[insert link]</i> . As long as the project area is within one the Eligible Geographic Areas as illustrated on the interactive map provided on the Urban Waters mapping website, the project area is eligible, regardless of whether or not it is a Brownfield project area. If that eligible project area is also a current or past recipient of a Brownfield Area Planning grant, that would not deem the project ineligible. Please review the threshold requirements carefully, as described in Section III of the RFP.
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<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. Is there a requirement for matching?	Yes. For this RFP, EPA has determined that an applicant must provide a minimum of \$4,000 as the non-federal cost share/match. In-kind cost share is allowed.
2. Do I need an indirect cost rate to apply for an Urban Waters Small Grant?	<p>No, having a federally approved indirect cost rate is not a requirement for applying for an Urban Waters Small Grant. However, if you do request indirect costs on line 22 of the SF 424-A, and do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or provisional) with a cognizant federal agency, and EPA preliminarily selects you for an award and requests a final application, <b>then</b> you must have submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to your cognizant federal agency at the time of final application submission to EPA. We will assist you in identifying the cognizant federal agency.</p> <p><b>Please note:</b> Non-profit recipients that do not have an approved indirect cost (IDC) rate, and where EPA is their cognizant agency, may use a flat 10% IDC rate. Recipients that opt to use the 10% flat rate are obligated to use the flat rate for the life of the grant award.</p>

<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
3. Can grant funds be used for salary for interns to work on our Urban Waters Small Grant project?	Yes, salaries for employees and interns hired as employees would be an eligible expense under this grant provided the employees perform work that is necessary to carry out the EPA funded project. Please note that in accordance with the instructions in Section IV.C. of the RFP, if salary costs are included in the proposed budget, they should be shown in the SF 424-A.
4. Can award recipients incur pre-award costs?	Yes, recipients may incur pre-award costs to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award and only with the written approval of the Federal awarding agency. Please see 2 CFR § 200.458 for more information. Please note that your organization may only incur pre-award costs "directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the Federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work." In the context of competitive funding, EPA interprets this provision to allow pre-award costs only after an organization has been notified that the Agency has selected it for an award.
6. If our partner is contributing personnel time, how is that reflected in the budget? We do not plan to make a subaward to our partner, because they are not receiving funds.	If your partners are contributing personnel time, this would be considered in-kind contributions and would count towards the \$4,000 cost share/match requirement provided the contributions comply with 2 CFR § 200.306 as applicable. It should be included as a line item in the SF424-A, in Section A (Non-Federal (d)), and Section B ((h) "Other"), along with a brief explanation in the budget narrative. Please note that if your organization will also be contributing personnel time from its own employees towards cost share/match, the value of those contributions are considered "Personnel" costs.
7. Is the \$40K to \$60K over both years or is it \$40K-\$60K each year for two years? Are awards given in lump sum, or by reimbursement?	Once the grant is awarded, the Agency will obligate the total award amount (\$40K - \$60K for the two years) at the time of the award. EPA does not award "lump sum" grants that recipients may draw down at one time. Grantees are paid in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.305 which provide that grantees may draw down funds only to meet immediate cash disbursement needs.
8. Can this grant be used by a state entity to send staff for stream restoration or other training classes?	Yes. As long as the training is part of an eligible activity under Section I.D of the RFP, it would be eligible for funding.

<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
9. What are fringe benefits?	Fringe benefit costs are those costs for personnel employment other than the employees' direct income (i.e., employer's portion of FICA insurance, retirement, sick leave, holiday pay, and vacation cost). Such costs should be included in line 6(b) of Section B of the Standard Form (SF) 424A. Helpful tips on writing a budget may be found at <a href="http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/ogd_budget_detail_guidance.pdf">http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/ogd_budget_detail_guidance.pdf</a> . See also Appendix B, Budget Sample, in the RFP.
10. What is the dollar range of the grants?	Applicants may not request more than \$60,000 in federal funding – proposals requesting more than \$60,000 in federal funds will not be reviewed. While there is no minimum, EPA suggests applicants request at least approximately \$40,000 in federal funds. A minimum non-federal cost share/match of \$4,000 is required (see Section III.B for information on the cost share/match requirement). It is anticipated that funded cooperative agreements will have a two-year project period.
11. Can municipalities use these funds to contract with consultants?	Yes, funds may be used to contract with consultants to perform eligible activities under CWA 104(b)(3). Please note that municipal recipients must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, as appropriate. Please see CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at <a href="http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm">http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm</a> for further details on the requirements for acquiring contract services and for guidance on how to address the use of contracts as a part of your budget narrative. Please note that EPA rarely accepts sole-source justifications for contracts for consultants even if the firm or individual is a "partner" on the proposal or prepares it on behalf of an eligible applicant.
12. Does the \$4,000 match deduct from the \$60,000 maximum funding limit?	No, cost share/match is not considered part of the maximum federal request of \$60,000; however, cost share/match dollars must be spent on activities that would be deemed eligible under CWA 104(b)(3), the funding authority for this grant program. In addition, applicants need to account for cost share/match in the total project costs and identify how cost share/match funds will be used to support the grant in their Standard Form (SF) 424-A and budget narrative.
13. The minimum match amount is \$4,000. Will proposals with higher match amounts be given a higher score?	No, proposals with a higher cost share/match value will not be awarded more points during application review. Please see Section V.A of the RFP which describes the selection criteria used to evaluate all proposals.

<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
14. Do land easements and land grants qualify as in-kind contributions?	Yes, land easement and land grants would qualify as in-kind contributions. Please be sure to see Section III.B for more information on in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions such as donations of interests in land are subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements described in 2 CFR § 200.306, as applicable.
15. Is grant administration an eligible expense?	Yes, provided the recipient normally charges its grants directly for actual costs for grant administration rather than including the costs for this function in its indirect cost rate. If your organization has a federal negotiated indirect cost rate you should check with your accountant to ensure that charging grant administration fees directly complies with the applicable OMB Cost Principals.
16. Should the committed dollar amount from partners be added to our total match amount? If we have several partners and one partner intends to pay for a part of the proposed project that is an ineligible activity for funding under 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act (e.g., construction or implementation activity), and this contributed amount is in addition to the \$4,000 match requirement, would this contribution also be considered match and therefore, be limited to the statutory funding authority (i.e., CWA 104(b)(3))?	Contributions from partner organizations may count towards the cost share/match requirement, subject to the rules regarding eligibility, allowability and documentation, as discussed in Section III.B of the RFP. Costs for ineligible activities, such as construction, cannot be used as match, but as long as the \$4,000 cost share/match requirement is properly met, there is no constraint on the contributions from other organizations. Leveraged dollars for ineligible activities (e.g., construction or implementation activities) should not be included as the total project cost of the proposed budget.
17. Is the budget narrative part of the 11-page limit?	Yes.



<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
18. How does EPA define a sub-award?	Please see CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at <a href="http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm">http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm</a> for further details on sub-awards. Sub-awards, also referred to as sub-grants, are funds awarded by the grantee to a nonprofit organization, public or private university (but not a proprietary school) or governmental unit that, as a partner, is undertaking activities in support of the funded project. These activities must be part of the organization's mission. Sub-awards are strictly cost-based transactions subject to the cost allowability and documentation standards in the federal grant regulations and there is no "profit" for the subawardee. As stated in the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision, "applicants must not use sub-awards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for-profit firms or individual consultants."
19. When will awards be selected and when will funds flow?	Applicants will learn whether or not their submission is successful in Spring of 2015. We expect to make awards in Summer 2015. Projects selected for award may begin once the final award has been issued.
20. Can the \$4k match be in the form of a grant from a different source?	It depends on whether the grant is from another federal agency or from a nonfederal source. Grants from nonfederal sources may be used as match to the extent that the nonfederal source permits. Funds from one federal grant may not be used to meet a match requirement for another federal grant unless there is legal authority to do so. An example of such authority is HUD's Community Development Block Grant statute. EPA does not have the legal authority to allow you to use federal funds to meet the match requirement for the Urban Waters Small Grant program.
21. What are the odds of getting funded? Do you have historical data for this RFP?	This is the 3rd competition of the Urban Waters Small Grants program. Please visit the small grants recipient webpages for more information on the previous grant competition: <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients</a> and <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients</a> . As discussed on the website, the 2011/2012 competition was national in scope and nearly 600 proposals were submitted. Of those proposals, 55 were selected for an award. In the 2013/2014 competition, which had a geographic focus, we received over 90 proposals and 37 were selected for an award. This is a highly competitive grants program.

<b>B. Budget/Funding Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
22. Is research equipment an eligible expense?	<p>In general, funds may be used to purchase equipment and material(s) to support an activity that is eligible for funding under the Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3), our statutory funding authority for this announcement.</p> <p>EPA's cost principles address the allowability of costs at 2 CFR Subpart E. The purchase of research equipment requires prior written approval by the project officer.</p>
23. We have a negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, which is 7 pages (includes IDC and Fringe Benefit Rates), does this go into the supporting documents section OR is it placed with the budget narrative and if so, does it count against the project description 11 page limit?	The Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is part of the SF 424A and not subject to the page limit expressed in the RFP. So, it does not count towards the 11-page limit of the proposal narrative.
24. We understand that consultants have to be competitively bid. Do we have to competitively bid our non-profit partners who will receive subawards?	No, subawardees do not have to be competitively bid, as long as it is a proper subaward. Please refer to the response to Question B.18.
25. Are we allowed to have a small business as a sub-contract?	<p>In general, it is permissible to include contracts as a part of your proposal. Please note, however, that applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, as appropriate. Please see CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at <a href="http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm">http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm</a> for further details on the requirements for acquiring contract services and for guidance on how to address the use of contracts as a part of your budget narrative.</p>
26. Are administration costs eligible?	Yes, administration costs are allowable as direct costs provided your organization does not include the same types of costs in the pool for calculating a federally approved indirect cost rate. You should consult with your organization's accountant if your organization has a federal indirect cost rate to ensure that this requirement is met.

<b>C. Evaluation Issues</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. Since the applicant is the entity (e.g. a university), does the performance on past federal grants apply to the “applicant” or the individual submitting the grant? If it is the “applicant”, that could present a problem for individuals working at large universities.	In Section V.A of the RFP, “Past Performance” refers to the applicant’s experience in managing federal or non-federal funding received through assistance agreements. Individuals are not eligible applicants and although they may have specific expertise to contribute to the project, their contributions may be reflected in addressing other criteria such as “Programmatic Capability.” If the applicant is a university, the “Past Performance” criterion would be that of the university, the entity managing the grant. As indicated in the RFP, the applicant may cite experience with federal and non-federal assistance agreements. (Note that grants are assistance agreements, while contracts are not.)
2. Since exact start dates are unknown, how specific should timelines be?	We anticipate making final awards in Summer of 2015. Applicants may begin their projects once the final award has been issued. Please see Section IV of the RFP, which describes what the project milestone schedule should entail.
3. Should the objectives be in the same order as listed in Section IV in the RFP?	Proposals should be logically and clearly organized for ease of scoring. We recommend that the proposals be organized as listed in Section IV.

<b>D. Grants.gov Questions</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. If we have an AOR registered for a previous EPA grant, do we need to re-register at this time?	No, you do not need to re-register with grants.gov. Please see the grants.gov FAQs at <a href="http://www.grants.gov">www.grants.gov</a> or contact the grants.gov hotline at 1-800-518-4726 for more information.
2. Can there be more than one staff member registered & designated with grants.gov as long as only one is designated for this particular EPA small urban waters grant?	Yes, there can be more than one staff member registered with grants.gov, but we recommend only one be the designated AOR for the Urban Waters Small Grants. Please see the grants.gov FAQs at <a href="http://www.grants.gov">www.grants.gov</a> or contact the grants.gov hotline at 1-800-518-4726 for more information.
3. Who is the Authorized Representative who should fill out and sign Box 21 of the SF 424? Should it be the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), as discussed in the RFP?	An officer, employee, or another member of your organization with authority to bind your organization to a contract should sign Box 21. The AOR is the individual your organization designates to register with www.grants.gov and upload the online submission package onto Grants.gov. Assistance for online submission may be provided by contacting the Grants.gov helpline at 1-800-518-4726.

E. Miscellaneous	
Question	Answer
1. Do I need to submit my Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) with my proposal if I intend to use grant funds for monitoring activities?	You do not need to submit a QAPP at the time you are submitting your proposal. If you do plan on collecting or using environmental data or information as part of your project, please see Sections IV and VIII of the RFP. The proposal should discuss how the applicant will comply with the Quality Assurance/Quality Control requirements, as specified in Section VIII. If your proposal is selected for funding and it is determined that a QAPP is necessary for your project, EPA can work with you directly to identify the necessary QA/QC requirements. If you intend to use grant funds to develop a QAPP for your project, those costs and activities will need to be included in your workplan and budget proposal and you should allow sufficient time and resources for this process in your timeline. Whether or not you intend to develop your QAPP with grant dollars, your QAPP will need to be approved before monitoring activities can begin.
2. My question concerns the requirements for QA/QC standards in data acquisition and reporting as specified in the RFP. If the environmental data we propose to collect is only for the purpose of education/training of students in the methods of water quality investigation, do we still need to meet the agency QA/QC protocols and submission requirements, or does that only apply to research quality data?	If you plan on collecting or using environmental data or information as part of your project, please see Sections IV and VIII of the RFP. You do not need to submit a Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) plan at the time you are submitting your proposal; however, the proposal should discuss how the applicant will comply with the QA/QC requirements, as specified in Section VIII.A. <b>To collect data for educational purposes only, the Urban Waters Small Grants program will require you to take QA/QC measures into account.</b> If your proposal is selected for funding EPA will work with you directly to identify the level of QA/QC practices appropriate for the project, and in your case, the QA/QC plan would likely be significantly scaled down from a full QAPP. If you intend to use grant funds to develop a QA/QC plan for your project, those costs and activities will need to be included in your workplan and budget proposal and you should allow sufficient time and resources for this process in your timeline. You do not need the QA/QC plan approved to apply, but if selected, it would have to be approved before data collection can take place.

<b>E. Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
3. Can you suggest what an appropriate amount of time might be to develop a Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) component, covering water quality sample data?	The time needed to develop a QA/QC plan will vary depending on the project. We ask that you use your research experience and expertise to provide your best estimate as to how much time to allow for this process in your proposal. Please keep in mind that if you are selected EPA can assist successful applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project. If QA/QC is required for the project, the successful applicant may work with the EPA QA/QC staff to determine the appropriate QA/QC practices for the project.
4. Why is EPA awarding cooperative agreements and what would an UWSG cooperative agreement look like?	We expect that the Urban Waters cooperative agreements will be awarded at ranges between \$40,000 and \$60,000. We specify that they will be cooperative agreements because we anticipate significant EPA involvement, which will be worked out when final workplans are negotiated. Consistent with the competition policy provisions in the announcement, we cannot comment or advise potential applicants on the specifics of how an award might be structured.
6. Are Davis Bacon & Buy America requirements applicable to this grant?	No. Davis Bacon Act and Buy American requirements apply to federally assisted projects only when the statute authorizing grant funding, or another statute such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, imposes the requirements. Neither Section 104 of the Clean Water Act nor any other statute requires that recipients of the Urban Waters Small Grants comply with Davis Bacon or Buy America requirements.
7. If a region is announced in a presidential disaster declaration, are they exempt from the Stafford Act?	We presume your question relates to Section 301 of the Stafford Act. That provision allows agencies to waive administrative requirements such as the \$4,000 cost share for the Urban Waters Small Grants when a state or local government in a disaster area requests such a waiver. EPA would consider such a waiver request. The applicant should submit the waiver request as part of the proposal package.
8. How should I organize the Proposal Narrative?	There is no specific format that applicants must follow in organizing their Proposal Narrative. Please use your discretion in how to format your proposal so that it best presents your information and can be reviewed against the criteria in the Section V of the RFP. Please make note of the guidelines regarding inclusion of page numbers, font size and margins discussed in Section IV. EPA may not advise you on how to structure your proposal to make it more competitive.

<b>E. Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
9. Where do we find information to answer Box 19 of the Standard Form (SF) 424, regarding whether the Executive Order (EO) 12372 process applies to our State?	You should confirm with your State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to determine if your application is subject to the review. Each state elects whether or not to review applications for Federal assistance, in order to be aware of what Federal aid is provided to that state. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB)'s guidance regarding the issue can be found at <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/">http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/</a> . This webpage also lists the SPOCs for the states that participate in the review. The webpage also states that if the state is not listed, then they do not participate, and option “C) Program is not covered by E.O. 12372” should be checked for Box 19 of the SF 424.
10. In Box 13 of the SF 424, what is the Competition Identification Number and Title?	There is no Competition Identification Number and Title for this announcement; please leave it blank.
11. Will you need EPA-experienced peer reviewers for this program?	No, EPA will not use nonfederal peer reviewers for this review and selection process. Projects may be reviewed by EPA Headquarters and EPA Regional review panel(s), which may include representatives from other federal agencies. Refer to Section V for a full description of the review and selection process.
12. When is the urban water small grants information session webinar?	Oct 22, 2015 at 2pm EST. EPA will attempt to answer any appropriate questions in this public forum. Registration information for the Information Session can be found at <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants</a> .
13. Will the webinar this afternoon will be captioned?	The webinar will not be captioned; rather, it will be recorded and transcribed. The recording and transcription, along with the webinar slides, will be available on our website ( <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants</a> ) after the webinar.
14. Do you have examples of past successful proposals?	EPA does not have examples of previous successful proposals, but you may visit these websites to view past Urban Waters Small Grants recipients: <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20112012-grant-recipients</a> and <a href="http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients">http://www2.epa.gov/urbanwaters/20132014-grant-recipients</a> .
15. Do we need to provide a similar table as one given in Appendix A?	No, this table is only meant to offer potential applicants project examples, and example project outputs and outcomes.

<b>E. Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
16. Should we plan for more than one person to attend the required in-person training?	At least one representative from the recipient organization should plan to attend. It is the recipient organization's decision to have more than one person from their organization attend the workshop.
17. What type of information will be included in the "final applications" that is not being requested as a part of this RFP?	Additional forms related to funding will be required and clarifications on proposal narratives will also be requested. Applicants whose proposals have been recommended for an award will be asked for more detail than was allowed within the proposal page limits. Please see Section VI of the RFP for more information on what the final application package may include.
18. How much time will there be between notification of the application status and submitting the final application, if selected for an award?	This will be negotiated by the EPA Project Officer after a proposal is deemed successful.